

Ep #45: Creative Intimacy While Dealing with Sexual Pain



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Dr. Sonia Wright

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You are listening to *The Midlife Sex Coach for Women™ Podcast*, episode 45.

Welcome to *The Midlife Sex Coach for Women™ Podcast*, the only show that combines a fun personality, medical knowledge, sexual counseling, and life coaching together. To create unique sex coaching that helps busy women awaken their libidos, address intimacy issues, and learn how to express their sexuality for the rest of their days. Here is your host, certified life coach and sexual counselor, Dr. Sonia Wright.

Hello Diamonds. I hope you are all enjoying the month of July and especially enjoying reconnecting with friends and family. Speaking of family, I actually have five siblings. And each one of them is really amazing and a blessing in my life. I was recently talking to my baby, baby brother Dwayne. And I love calling him my little brother because he's actually 6 foot 2 and I'm 4 foot 11 on a good day. But I'm also 11 years older than him. And so, he will always be my little brother. Even if there is over a foot difference between us.

Anyway, Dwayne was recently congratulating me on my podcast and telling me that he learns a lot from listening to me. I actually didn't know that he really listened to my podcast, so that's pretty cool. He also told me that he has advised some of his male friends to tune into my podcast as well. And he told me that he has a better understanding of what women deal with in terms of sex and sexuality, and societal norms. And he also mentioned that it has helped him look more closely at his own thoughts around sex and sexuality and really the importance of maintaining intimacy no matter what.

I love the idea that men are listening to my podcast too and they're actually learning from it. Frankly, it's something I had not really thought about, but the more I think about it, the more jazzed I get about the idea. If my podcast helps partners understand the women in their lives, and understand sexuality in general, and also if my podcast help men figure out their own thoughts and their own emotions around sex, then I'm 100% for

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it. So, thank you, baby brother for enlightening me about my own limiting beliefs and helping me to see that men are listening too.

So, to all the men out there that are listening, I say welcome, you are certainly Diamonds too. Lots of love to you.

This week we'll be finishing up about the series that we started around painful sex. And I wanted to talk to you about what might be going on in a woman's mind when she's dealing with vulva vaginal pain or pain with sex. Women are really, really hard on themselves. They're in physical pain and on top of that they're actually beating themselves up emotionally about having this painful condition. I've coached many women around the issues of dealing with pain.

And here's a list of the most common thoughts that women who are dealing with pain are discussing with me. And this is not in a particular order. I'm bringing up this list because I want you to be aware of these thoughts. You may be thinking them now or possibly you might develop a painful condition in the future and then start thinking about these thoughts in the future. And this is something that could possibly happen because 75% of women experience pain with sex at some point in their lives.

Okay, here's the list. I'm broken. There's something wrong with me. No one else is experiencing this. I must be the only one experiencing pain. I guess this is just what happens when you get older, I lose lubrication and sex becomes painful. It's all my fault. My partner's going to leave me because I don't have sex. I'll just have to suck it up and bear the pain. My partner needs sex. And here's another one that's a close second thought which is it's my duty as a wife to provide sex. If I don't do it quickly maybe it won't hurt so much. It's probably all in my head, the doctor said it was.

Nothing can be done to fix this problem. I just have to live with it. I'll just have to stop having sexual intimacy altogether. I'm just going to stop having sex, this is it, I can't tolerate this pain anymore. Maybe if I avoid my

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partner and avoid any type of touch, then my partner will not be interested in sex and everything will be okay. I really just can't talk to my partner about this problem. It might actually hurt their feelings so instead I'm just going to tolerate the pain and just have sex as quickly as possible and get it over with.

Okay Diamonds, whatever the thought it usually leads to a visit from one of our frenemies, you know, the ones that I call the emotional bullies. Here come our frenemies of shame, and guilt, and self-criticism, embarrassment, self judgement. And you know what? I call them frenemies because we feel comfortable with them. It's so easy for us to go down this track where we're feeling the guilt, and the shame, and criticizing ourselves. But these emotional bullies are not helpful in any way, they usually lead to us feeling worse about ourselves.

And this combination of thoughts, the thoughts that I listed out and the frenemies, those feelings, they lead to a set of actions. And these actions usually look like avoiding intimacy, avoiding your partner altogether, avoiding the partner's touch, a lack of communication. Maybe isolating yourself from friends and family, you don't want to talk about the pain situation. Or it's like ignoring the pain signals from our body, that's another choice, another action that people take. Not prioritizing our health, that is an important one.

Resenting or hating our bodies for being different. These are some of the actions that we take, and ultimately the results are we have decreased intimacy. We're isolated and we're disconnected from our own bodies. We're disconnected from ourselves. And we're disconnected from our partners. If this is you and you have been dealing with this pain then I want you to know that you matter, you are precious. And you deserve to be pain free. You deserve better than this. But it's also a decision that you have to make. Nobody else can make this decision but you.

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You have to decide that you are worthy enough to be pain free and you're worthy enough to have more in life. You really deserve to have amazing intimacy and to be connected to yourself, to your body, to your partner, to your friends. And you deserve to get the treatment that you need and you deserve to be pain free, 100%.

So, in episode 41 and 42 we talked about where you can go to get the help that you need, and what different treatment options may be available for you. So, if you haven't had a chance to listen to those episodes, go back to listen to them because they have references and ideas as to where to go to get and find the providers and the treatment that you need.

But right now, I want to focus on the thoughts. Because the thoughts are what are stopping you, stopping you from getting the help that you need, stopping you from creating the amazing intimacy in your life while you're dealing with this situation. And so, I'm going to ask you some questions so we can look at the thoughts. So, get your journals out, Diamonds, let's do this.

So, what are the thoughts that are blocking you from getting the help that you need? What is stopping you from prioritizing your health? What is stopping you from putting your needs first? And why are you choosing to ignore the pain signals that your body is telling you to let you know that something is wrong? Ultimately it comes down to not valuing ourselves enough to get the help that we need. But it's not our fault, Diamonds. This is actually another way in which women have been conditioned from a young age to tolerate pain and to ignore their own needs.

When we learn about menstrual periods we also start to get introduced to this topic of the idea that pain is part of a woman's life and that it's something that we should learn to tolerate. Maybe we're concerned that we'll be labeled weak if we're not willing to tolerate pain. So, from a young age we are like, "Hey, pain is just part of being a woman." And so, we lose

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our voice. We lose our ability to say, “This is not right, this is not something that I should be tolerating.”

We are also taught from a young age that our needs are not a priority. We’re taught that a good woman puts the needs of her children and the needs of her partner before her own needs. Where exactly are we taught that the needs of the woman are a priority for ourselves? We’re just not taught this.

And so, this brings me to the point where I say it’s time for the wise one to come for another visit. Remember the wise one is our inner guide who acknowledges our needs. She’s the one who gives us permission to take care of ourselves. She’s also the one that says, “Hell, no.” To tolerating pain and to loss of intimacy in our life. I also call her the selfish bitch because other people call her that. But I’m reclaiming this word or these words, Selfish bitch.

And I’m saying that the selfish bitch is actually the wise person in your life. Remember she’s the one that rides in on the horse and saves you. Yes, Diamonds, once again I’m telling you that you are the only one who can save yourself. But you have to decide that you are worth saving. So, while you’re looking into your different treatment options, let’s take the time to create that amazing intimacy that you deserve. Honestly, this pertains to any situation where penetration is an issue and intimacy has decreased.

Society says that sexual intimacy equates to penetrative sex, penetrative sex only and that good penetrative sex requires an orgasm from penetration. And I say, no, this is not true at all. Sexual intimacy is so much more than just penetration. It’s so much more than penetration, zero. You can have amazing sexual intimacy and have no penetration at all. As I like to say, it’s about Dr. Sonia’s triad of sexual intimacy. Is there connection? Is there satisfaction? Is there pleasure? Those are the key component that make sexual intimacy wonderful.

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And none of those factors require penetration. What is required is communication and creativity. Remember, you get to define sexual intimacy for yourself in whatever way you like. If you're partnered, you and your partner get to define that intimacy for yourselves. So maybe it's a matter of committing to maintaining the touch and that pleasure no matter what. Maybe it's about getting creative with your sexual acts. How can you and your partner preserve the pleasure and the intimacy while taking the focus off of penetration?

I'm not saying take the focus off of penetration forever. I'm saying take the focus off of penetration while you're getting the treatment, while you're figuring out the pain situation. Maybe it's about incorporating oral sex. Maybe it's about utilizing sex toys. Maybe a masturbation sleeve. Maybe you try different positions without penetration. Maybe you incorporate mutual masturbation into your sexual intimacy time, or maybe you have fun playing roles or acting out fantasies. Of course, if you're acting out fantasies make sure consent and safety are a part of the discussion.

So, really there is no limit to your creativity. And in fact, when I tell my clients to take penetrative sex off the table it releases all the anxiety and the stress. And it's so much easier to communicate. It's so much easier to connect. It's so much easier to touch and to get back to that pleasure. There's so much anxiety and concern about penetration and pain that it's this negative feedback loop and you don't ever get to that place of the connection, and the pleasure, and the satisfaction.

So, take the penetration off the table for a while, while you're getting the treatment. But focus on the intimacy. And create the intimacy that you want because when you add back in the penetration, it's just so much better because you already had that connection there. And you already had the amazing sexual intimacy, and that's just like a cherry on top of it all.

Remember you get to have fun with this. You can come up with years of fun and enjoyment if you're willing to shift your mindset around this issue.

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Sexual intimacy does not equate to penetration, it is so much more. It's so much richer. It's so much more amazing than you can imagine. You get to be creative with this and you get to create this wonderful intimacy that you deserve.

So, take penetration off the table while you're treating the pain. And take the opportunity to get back to the touch, back to the intimacy, and back to the love. And remember that pleasure can be yours if you give yourself permission to think outside the box.

So again, I ask you some questions, Diamond. What do you need to think in order to get the treatment that you need? What do you need to think in order to give yourself permission to experience pleasure without the pain? What do you need to think to put yourself first? What do you need to think to redefine sexual intimacy for you and your partner? What do you need to think to go on this creative journey together, or by yourself, what do you need to think?

And let me remind you that you only have one life. So, find your wise one, make that choice, save yourself, Diamonds. Choose treatment, choose sustained intimacy, choose pleasure, choose continued connection. But most of all, Diamonds, choose you. Choose you. Choose you.

Okay Diamonds, that's all for this week, and I will talk to you next time. And if you need any help with any sexual issues then come work with me for 30 days and kickstart that intimacy in your life. Okay, lots of love, Diamonds. Dr. Sonia out.

Diamonds, how is your sex life? No, really, how is your sex life? On a scale of one to ten how would you rate it? You know I'm all about the intimacy for women in midlife. If you rated the passion in your life as less than an eight then we need to talk, sister. I'm personally inviting you to check out my new program, Your Empowered Sexuality 30 day kick starter. I am so excited about this program. Most of you know that I have an impossible goal to

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positively impact the sex lives of over a million women. And I am just getting started.

Come work with me for 30 days to kick start that intimacy in your life. Let's create that amazing, satisfying, intimacy that you deserve. Let's face it, if you're in your 40s, 50s or 60s, you could have 30 to 50 more years of intimacy ahead of you. What do you want that intimacy to look like? Let's get real and talk about what's going on with your body, your libido, let's see what we can do to kickstart this intimacy. This program is for you whether or not you have a partner.

If you are a woman who wants to enjoy all aspects of her life then this is the program for you. It finally gets to be your time. So, click on the link in the show notes or on my website at soniawrightmd.com and come join me for Your Empowered Sexuality aka YES, Your Empowered Sexuality 30 day kick starter. I cannot wait to see you Diamond, talk to you soon. Take care.